

To the committee representatives.

I am writing you to oppose HB 5679. As many of you are aware there are a number of issues with the current SORA that the court ruled unconstitutional over 3 years ago. During this time congress has done nothing to address those issue. Now that the “clock is running out” HB 5679 has been introduced in an effort to pass anything before the timer expires on the current court decision. Unfortunately HB 5679 does not address the court issues with the current SORA as has been pointed out by a number of people including the state AG. I understand why your committee and congress in general have been unable to pass a new law or even fix the issues with the current law.

Let’s face it. The current SORA law and even HB 5679 are a dead frog of a law. By that I mean you and everyone in our state congress are unwilling to dissect this law and truly get your hands dirty. This is a complicated issue and no easy fix is readily available. Like many people in biology class the idea of dissecting a dead frog is not a pleasant one at the best of times. This is most definitely not the best of times right now. Unfortunately for all of you there is no lab partner that is going to step up and do the dirty work of dissecting this dead frog of a law. Not only is this a dead frog of a law but during an election year this is a dead TOXIC frog of a law. Ironically you have all been doing what is perhaps the best course of action when it comes to this law – Nothing.

Let this dead frog of a law and HB 5679 truly die. That is probably the best course of action and perhaps the safest course of action for all of you to take right now. If you are concerned about how this may play out in the media and public I will offer some advice on how this can be handled.

1. Tell the truth. The law was unconstitutional and doing more harm then good.
2. Tell the truth. A public registry does not protect the public.
3. Tell the truth. The media, the courts and yes even congress have over stated the dangers and stereotypes of sex offenders for a variety of reasons.
4. Tell the truth. The registry is very expensive and the money and resources wasted on it right now can be better spent on programs that actually work. In fact with the looming budgetary shortfalls facing not only this state but every state this is something that the state truly can not afford right now.

This is an election year and I know that the natural inclination of many of you is do something that will benefit your political chances but that is not a valid reason for passing a law that has already been ruled unlawful and unconstitutional. The impact of a law of this magnitude and scope is something that effects thousands of people whether they are on the registry or not. Take the proper time to listen to the experts. Take the time to study the data and when and if a new law is needed you will all be in a better position to do something then rather then rushing things now to beat the clock.

I thank you for you time and understanding on this issue.

Bret Preece